

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Representative Lee Terry (NE-02) today introduced H.R. 5249, the "Stop Aid to Counterfeiters Act." The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is currently providing taxpayer dollars to finance counterfeiters of the trademarks of products and services. This bipartisan legislation aims to end this practice that runs contrary to goals of foreign assistance aid.

"I believe strongly that the taxpayers should not finance the activities of counterfeiters of goods and services," said Terry. "Legislation is necessary, as currently there is no federal law against foreign assistance being provided to counterfeiters. This practice runs contrary to goals of foreign assistance aid and should be blocked. This legislation will benefit a wide variety of business interests that provide services and products abroad, including those in Nebraska."

This legislation would ensure that taxpayer monies are not being used for foreign assistance to organizations that traffic in counterfeit goods and services. It requires aid recipients and sub-recipients to certify that they hold/own all relevant intellectual property rights to perform obligations of their assistance and that they have not knowingly trafficked in counterfeit goods and services.

An example of the illegal activity involves the Gallup Organization located in Terry's Congressional District of Omaha, NE. Gallup holds more than 1,000 trademarks around the globe in more than 100 countries. However, organizations in foreign countries are conducting market research and electoral polling using the Gallup name without permission or license, all the while receiving American taxpayer support from the USAID. This unauthorized use of the Gallup name could injure the excellent reputation and good will of the Gallup Organization if used in an improper manner.

The Stop Aid to Counterfeiters Act has 15 original cosponsors, including Representatives Tom Osborne (NE-03) and Jeff Fortenberry (NE-01).

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